

From: Bill Fisk
To: Microsoft ATR
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An example of the current 'problem' of Microsoft's monopoly in the OS and office productivity software markets is the ubiquitous '.doc' file. This one proprietary file format I believe is one of the cornerstones of Microsoft's OS/productivity suite monopoly. Many people I know in the academic and business communities regularly purchase updated versions of Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office for the sole reason that their correspondents send them .doc files as e-mail attachments. The options for importing these files into 3rd party applications are many; however, having personally tried a number of such programs, I can say that many work well some of the time, none work well all of the time. The continuing cycle of forced upgrades to maintain compatibility with correspondents lies at the heart of Microsoft's monopoly.

As a solution to this kind of problem, I believe that Microsoft should be compelled to disclose the specifications of the file formats used by its products to anyone who sends or receives files in such formats and requests the information.

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Bill Fisk, Ph.D., Professor
Educational Foundations Coordinator
Co-Director of PT3 Project Jericho
<http://itcenter2.clemson.edu/jericho>
404-B Tillman Hall
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634-0715
864-656-5119 (fax 864-656-1322)